THE CORPORATION OF THE TOWNSHIP OF SEVERN

CULTURE & RECREATION
ADVISORY COMMITTEE

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 11, 2013
Council Chambers - Municipal Office
7:00 P.M.

- AGENDA -

A. CALL TO ORDER

B. DISCLOSURE OF PECUNIARY INTEREST & THE GENERAL NATURE THEREOF

C. PRESENTATIONS/DELEGATIONS
   • "NIL"

D. REPORT FROM OFFICIALS (for information)
   1. Culture & Recreation Advisory Committee Minutes 07/11/2013
   2. Recreation Report No. R13-007 re Outdoor Rink
   5. Recreation Report No. R13-011 re Park and Playground Development
   8. Recreation Report No. R13-014 re Soccer Fields

E. REPORTS FROM OFFICIALS (for direction)
   1. Recreation Report No. R13-010 re E-Bikes on the Uhthoff Trail (see Agenda Item F-1)
   2. Discussion re Items for 2014 Budget

F. CORRESPONDENCE (for information)
   1. Dave Hemm email, 08/31/2013, re E-Bikes
   2. Steven Zeidler e-mail, 07/11/2013, re Bike Tour Report

G. CORRESPONDENCE (for direction)
   1. Stephanie Stanton re Muskoka Concert Band in Washago Park (B/F)

H. ADJOURNMENT
**Dates for Future Culture & Recreation Advisory Committee Meetings**

- Thursday, October 10, 2013 – 7:00 p.m.
- Thursday, November 14, 2013 – 7:00 p.m.
- Thursday, December 12, 2013 – 7:00 p.m.

- **N/C** - Denotes Not Copied
- **B/F** - Denotes Brought Forward
- **C/R** - Denotes Council Referral
MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE CULTURE & RECREATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE HELD AT THE ADMINISTRATION BUILDING, 1024 HURLWOOD LANE, THURSDAY, JULY 11th, 2013 AT 7:00 P.M.

PRESENT: Chair
Vicki Gray
Barb Clare-Powell
Judith Cox
Lisa Ferguson
Grace Smith
Richard Weese
Steven Zeidler

Members

STAFF: Director of Public Works
Clayton Cameron
Culture & Rec Co-ordinator
Kerri Craig-Paul
Secretary
Elizabeth Staszkow

ABSENT: Member
Bill Harvey
Si Lowry
Stuart Lowrey
Tarryn Reineke
Stephanie Stanton

CALL TO ORDER
Vicki Gray, Chair, called the meeting to order 7:02 p.m.

DISCLOSURE OF PECUNIARY INTEREST AND THE GENERAL NATURE THEREOF
• "NIL"

DELEGATIONS
• "NIL"

REPORTS FROM OFFICIALS (for information)

Culture & Recreation Advisory Committee Minutes 05/09/2013

Recreation Report No. R13-006, 06/25/2013, re Recreation Update

Judith Cox Update re Coldwater Lions Club 06/25/2013 Community Engagement Meeting

Richard Weese re Hope Community Church

Barb Clare-Powell re Issues on Uhthoff Trail
MOTION CRAC07112013-01: Moved by Steven Zeidler and seconded by Richard Weese that the following reports be received as information:

1. CRAC Minutes May 9, 2013;
3. Judith Cox Update with respect to the Coldwater Lions Club June 25th, 2013 Community Engagement Meeting;
4. Richard Weese with respect to the Hope Community Church Facility and Basketball Program; and
5. Barb Clare-Powell with respect to issues on the Uhthoff Trail.

AND FURTHER THAT the Recreation Co-ordinator contact the County of Simcoe regarding rules and signage for electric cycles on trails.

CARRIED

REPORTS FROM OFFICIALS (for direction)
- "NIL"

CORRESPONDENCE (for information)

Art on the Severn

MOTION CRAC07112013-02: Moved by Lisa Ferguson and seconded by Steven Zeidler that correspondence regarding Art on the Severn July 13th and 14th, 2013 Art Show and Sale be received as information.

CARRIED

CORRESPONDENCE (for direction)

Stephanie Stanton re Muskoka Concert Band in Washago Park

MOTION CRAC07112013-3: Moved by Steven Zeidler and seconded by Grace Smith that correspondence from Stephanie Stanton, dated June 25, 2013, with respect to the Muskoka Concert Band performing at Washago Park be deferred to the next Culture & Recreation Advisory Committee meeting.
CARRIED

Judith Cox re Development of Parks

MOTION CRAC07112013-04: Moved by Richard Weese and seconded by Lisa Ferguson that discussions with respect to development of parkland at Bass Lake (Locke Subdivision) and Westshore be received;

AND FURTHER THAT staff report back to Committee regarding costs and development of these proposed parks.

CARRIED

Judith Cox re Budget Money for Soccer Pitches/Skate Park

MOTION CRAC07112013-05: Moved by Lisa Ferguson and seconded by Judith Cox that discussions with respect to Marchmont and Westshore Soccer Pitches and Coldwater Skate Park be received as information;

AND FURTHER THAT staff prepare an updated report with costs for Committee prior to budget discussions.

CARRIED

Interpretive Signs for Matchedash Bay

MOTION CRAC07112013-06: Moved by Grace Smith and seconded by Richard Weese that Interpretive Signs for Matchedash Bay be received as information;

AND FURTHER THAT we receive agreement from Dr. Lowry (absent) and Dr. Nancy Ironside prior to preparing and installing signage.

CARRIED

Cancel/Reschedule August CRAC Meeting

MOTION CRAC07112013-07: Moved by Steven Zeidler and seconded by Grace Smith that the August 8, 2013 Culture & Recreation
Advisory Committee meeting be cancelled due to Council rescheduling their meeting to that date.

CARRIED

ADJOURNMENT – 8:15 p.m.

MOTION CRAC07112013-08: Moved by Judith Cox and seconded by Barb Clare-Powell that this meeting be and is hereby now adjourned.

CARRIED

Vicki Gray, Chair

Elizabeth Staszekow, Secretary

Dates for Future Culture & Recreation Advisory Committee Meeting

- Thursday, August 8, 2013 CANCELLED
- Thursday, September 12, 2013 – 7:00 p.m.
- Thursday, October 10, 2013 – 7:00 p.m.
- Thursday, November 14, 2013 – 7:00 p.m.
- Thursday, December 12, 2013 – 7:00 p.m.
REPORT

TO: Chair & Members of the
Culture & Recreation Advisory Committee

FROM: Clayton Cameron
Director of Public Works

DATE: 30 July 2013

RE: Outdoor Rink

Recommendation

That Recreation Report No. R13-007, dated 30 July 2013, with respect to an Outdoor Rink received as information.

Background

On different occasions the subject of an outdoor rink has been discussed. Staff was requested to report on the costs to operate an outdoor rink with artificial ice.

Port McNichol has a similar facility that was recently built. To-date, 2012/2013 operating costs show a deficit of $105,000.00. This will be a recurring expense.

Our existing arena in Coldwater presently will operate with a $250,000.00 deficit.

Financial Impact

Should an outdoor rink be constructed in the Coldwater area, it will add an additional $105,000.00 to the budget and may also cause a negative effect on the arena, which could detract from our present ice usage.

Respectfully submitted,

Clayton Cameron, CRSS
Director of Public Works
/es
Recommendation

That Recreation Report No. R13-008, dated 9 August 2013, with respect to Splash Parks be received as information.

Background

Staff was requested to provide information regarding Splash Parks at the Council meeting in July.

The Georgian Bay Township Splash Park in Port Severn cost $200,000 to construct. It has a recirculating unit on it. The recirculating unit is a maintenance issue and requires a substantial amount of staff time to keep it maintained. The recirculating unit is now out of service. The Splash Pad is now simply water in and out with a de-chlorination unit to prevent any effect on the receiving water in the Severn River.

The unit in Port Severn, for 21 days in July, used an average of 61.5m$^3$/day (13,530 gallons) which would be a cost of $135 per day or $8,100 for two months (July & August). There is a cost of $2,000 to start up and shut down the system and an estimated cost of $3,000 for hydro.

Essa Township has a splash park in Angus and are building a second unit in Thornton. There is no recirculating unit on their parks. The capital cost is $107,590.00. This unit requires 98 gal/min of water. The water used is 26.7m$^3$/hour which is 213.6m$^3$/day at a cost of $468 per day.

In Severn the only water systems that could facilitate a splash park are Westshore and Coldwater. A smaller unit may be considered for Washago or Bass Lake but is not
recommended due to the limited water supply.

The most common time of use is 10:00am – 6:00pm.

**Financial Impact**

From the information received, the non-recirculating splash park would be the correct choice. If possible the effluent water would need to go directly to the environment, contingent on MOE approval.

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<tr>
<td>Construction costs</td>
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<td>Consultant Services</td>
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<td>Operating Costs (best guess)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hydro</td>
<td>$3,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Water</td>
<td>$8,000</td>
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<td>Start/Close</td>
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<tr>
<td>Staff oversight</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$16,000</td>
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</table>

This is a long term commitment and should be based on a 20 year life cycle.

Respectfully submitted,

Clayton Cameron, CRSS
Director of Public Works

[Signature]

WITH CONCURRENCE
Recommendation

That Recreation Report No. R13-009, dated 21 August 2013, with respect to a Ball Diamond Back Drop be received;

And Further That Committee provide direction on the installation of Back Drop on the Baseball Diamond in Coldwater.

Background

At the July Council meeting, staff was requested to research a back drop for ball diamonds to reduce the glare of the sun during ball games in Coldwater and Washago. Upon review, the Washago ball diamond faces west, therefore, a back drop would serve no purpose, as the sun shines towards the batter not the fielders.

In Coldwater, it is the opposite, the diamond faces east and the sun shines toward the fielder, making it difficult to see the ball in the air. There are back stop treatments available. A reasonable type is a "windscreen" product that is used in Innisfil. To cover the Coldwater backstop would cost in the area of $700.00 plus the cost to install it on the backstop.

It is recommended that the sun screen be removed and stored during the winter season.

Two years ago, an attempt was made to provide a sun shade on the back stop but was not successful. At best a sun shade will only cast a shadow of a small area of the playing field and may prove to be of little value.
Financial Impact

The cost for the sun screen on the Coldwater back stop would be $700.00. This would be a 2014 expense as the ball season is over for this year.

Respectfully submitted,

Clayton Cameron, CRSS
Director of Public Works

[Signature]

WITH CONCURRENCE

[Signature]

CAO.
REPORT

TO: Chair & Members of the Culture & Recreation Advisory Committee
FROM: Kerri Craig-Paul Recreation Coordinator
DATE: 30 August 2013
RE: Park and Playground Development

Recommendation

That Recreation Report No. R13-011, dated 30 August 2013, with respect to Park and Playground Development be received as information.

Background

Staff was requested at the July 11, 2013 Recreation meeting to provide information regarding future Park Land Development and various Play Structures.

Playpower was contacted to provide information and quotes on Playground Structures that have been integrated in other Townships i.e.) Innisfil and New Tecumseh. These structures can range from $20,000 to $45,000, including installation (see Appendix “A”). Additional Playground structures may be added on at a later time.

SofSurfaces provided information regarding surface material. This product is made of recycled material, featuring interlocking tiles and color combinations. Costs associated with choosing a surface need to be considered, including leveling, installation, maintenance and vandalism. Positive aspects of utilizing surface materials are accessibility, 10 year warranty, and a cushioned surface provides fall protection. A quote was provided from a playground recently installed in Meadow Park in Windsor, and Kawartha Village in Peterborough (see Appendix “B”).

Innova Disc Golf provided a course for the City of Orillia at Homewood Park (see Appendix “C”). They also provide packages for a 9 Hole Course starting at Eco Course $3,275, Basic Course $3,675, Deluxe Course $8,805 and a Championship Course $10,990. Staff believes the Eco Course would be sufficient, especially with the course following a paved path around the parkland.
**Financial impact**

If decided to proceed, cost can be included in 2014 Budget.

Respectfully submitted,

\[Signature\]

Kerri Craig-Paul  
Recreation Coordinator  
/es

**Attachments**  
Appendix “A”- Playpower structures  
Appendix “B”- SofSurfaces  
Appendix “C”- Innova Disc Golf
$35,000
Project Stats

Product: SofTILE Premium Project
Size: 4650 Sq.ft.
Fall Height: 8 feet
Safety Performance: 368-567 HIC
Warranty: 10 years including safety performance
Square Foot: $12.00 installed

Sent to: MPprophet-Healy@TOWNSHIPOFSEVERN.COM

Unsubscribe
SciSURFACES
4393 Discovery Line
Petrolia, Ontario N0N 1R0
Canada
The Stats:

**Product:** SofTILE Plus Safety Surfacing  
**Size:** 2425 Sq. Ft.  
**Fall Height:** 8 Feet  
**Warranty:** 10 years (including compliance with all Safety standards)  
**Cost:** 10.66 sq.ft. installed

*This project was eligible for $3970.00 in funding through the Ontario Tire Stewardship Community Grant program. For more information about The Ontario Tire Stewardship community Grant program please click here.*
HOMEWOOD PARK - DISC GOLF HOLE LAYOUT
TO: Chair & Members of the Culture & Recreation Advisory Committee  
FROM: Kerri Craig-Paul  
Recreation Coordinator  
DATE: 30 August 2013  
RE: Skate Park

**Recommendation**

That Recreation Report No. R13-012, dated 30 August 2013, with respect to a Skate Park be received as information.

**Background**

Staff was requested at the July 11, 2013 Recreation meeting to provide updated information regarding Skate Park structures and quotes.

There are a variety of Skate structures to choose from depending on frame materials; all steel, precast concrete, steel frame/Skatelite Surface, wood frame/Skatelite Surface and poured in place concrete. This company also permits adding to existing skate parks. Staff does not suggest the all steel as there are already existing steel structures in place that the public has concern over.

Prices for these structures are consistent with the previous Recreation Report R12-012 (see Appendix "A").

There is also a DIY Kit available; starting price is $5,000 to $17,000. These systems are smaller in scale by comparison but include the same features. These comprise of wood frame structures, galvanized steel guardrail, edge protection, and plywood is protected by Ramp Armor. Community involvement to build the Skate Park may develop pride and respect for their Skate Park.

**Financial Impact**

If Recreation Committee decides to go forward with Skate Park cost would be covered in 2014 budget.
Respectfully submitted,

Kerri Craig-Paul
Recreation Coordinator

Attachments
Appendix "A"- Report R12-012
Recommendation

That Recreation Report No. R12-012, dated 2012, with respect to a possible Skateboard Park and Soccer Pitch

Background
Washago Park Skate Board Park

There are 2 different kinds of skateboard parks to choose from each with surface, and structure variables.

1. Portable Skate Board Park System  $25 000.00 - $300 000.00
   - Place on an existing cement pad surface.
   - Put a cement pad in place.
   - Can be moved throughout various locations.
   - Can add on pieces in future if space permits.

2. Modular In Ground Concrete Skate Board Park  $35 000.00 - $300 000.00
   - Pre-engineered precast precision concrete ramp.
   - Modules are delivered, backfill site, complete flat work.
   - Construction timeframe is greatly reduced vs. poured in place construction.
   - Can add on / expand in future.
   - Is a destination attraction.
**Financial Impact**
- $25,000.00 - $300,000.00

Respectfully submitted,

Darlene Duprey
Recreation Co-ordinator

/es

**Attachments**

Appendix “1” – Product Detail
REPORT

R13-013

TO: Chair & Members of the
Culture & Recreation Advisory Committee

FROM: Kerri Craig-Paul
Recreation Coordinator

DATE: 03 September 2013

RE: Outdoor Fitness

Recommendation

That Recreation Report No. R13-013, dated 03 September 2013, with respect to Outdoor Fitness be received as information.

Background

Staff was requested at the July 11, 2013 Recreation meeting to provide information regarding Outdoor Fitness structures and quotes.

The previous company contacted for Outdoor Gym equipment "Green Gym" is no longer producing outdoor fitness equipment. Staff was directed to "Outdoor Fitness Concepts" and was provided with various fitness packages (see Appendix "A").

Packages start at $15,000 and can cost up to $26,000, each package has 6, 7, 8 or 11 pieces of equipment. There is also the option to buy pieces separately, this is not as cost effective if a package was purchased but does allow for specific pieces of equipment (see Appendix "B"). These prices do not include shipping, installation or surfacing.

Financial Impact

If Recreation Committee decides to go forward with an Outdoor Fitness structure cost would be covered in 2014 budget.
Respectfully submitted,

\[Signature\]

Kerri Craig-Paul
Recreation Coordinator
\[Signature\]

**Attachments**
Appendix “A”- Outdoor Fitness Concepts Package Prices
Appendix “B”- Outdoor Fitness Equipment Price List
Summer Special

Order a package by Sep 20th, and get our NEW solar Park Light for Free.

- **BronzeFit**
  - Price: $15,195

- **SilverFit**
  - Price: $19,995

- **ElderFit**
  - Price: $16,327

- **GoldFit**
  - Price: $26,101

- ** TweenFit**
  - Price: $16,585

- **YouthFit**
  - Price: $17,285

Visit [www.outdoorfitnessconcepts.com](http://www.outdoorfitnessconcepts.com) for more information.
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<th>Item</th>
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<td>BALANCE BEAM</td>
<td>$599</td>
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<tr>
<td>BASKETBALL BACKBOARD</td>
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<tr>
<td>BASKETBALL SYSTEM</td>
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<td>BOUNCING BARS</td>
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<tr>
<td>CHEST PRESS</td>
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<td>CHEST PRESS / LAT PULL COMBO</td>
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<td>DOME CLIMBER</td>
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<td>DUAL EXERCISE BARS</td>
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<td>LAT PULL DOWN</td>
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<td>LEG PRESS TRAINER (2 Station)</td>
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<td>M-SHAPED CLIMBING LADDER</td>
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TO: Chair & Members of the Culture & Recreation Advisory Committee
FROM: Kerri Craig-Paul Recreation Coordinator
DATE: 03 September 2013
RE: Soccer Fields

Recommendation

That Recreation Report No. R13-014, dated 03 September 2013, with respect to Soccer Fields be received as information.

Background

Staff was requested at the July 11, 2013 Recreation meeting to provide information regarding Soccer Field information and quotes.

It would be ideal to use an existing space; this would keep costs down as the only necessary maintenance would be grounds keeping and line painting. This would also allow for field sizes to differ based on the need.

Staff received three quotes on three different soccer goals; both portable and permanent (see Appendix “A”) for more information.

Corner flags would also need to be purchased, a set of 4 PVC flags with solid steel peg with springs at a cost of $69.99 can be found at Flaghouse.

Financial Impact

If Recreation Committee decides to go forward. Soccer Field cost would be covered in 2014 budget.
Respectfully submitted,

Kern Craig-Paul
Recreation Coordinator
/es

Attachments
Appendix "A"- Soccer Goals
8' x 24' Soccer/Football Goal
$3,014.00/pair (plus HST, shipping and installation)
Adjustable Steel Telescoping Goals Aluminum
$3,737.00/ pair (Plus nets, HST, and Shipping)
All-Aluminum Semi-Permanent
Available Sizes: 8’x24’, 6.5’x18.5’, 6’x18’, 6.5’x12’
$3,650.00/pair (plus HST, shipping and installation)
Recommendation

That Recreation Report No. R13-015, dated 03 September 2013, with respect to Hope Community Christian Church be received as information.

Background

Staff was requested at the July 11, 2013 Recreation meeting to provide information regarding the Hope Community Christian Church and their facilities.

Staff met with Pastor Steve Barker July 30, 2013 at the church. This facility has a number of amenities, including a small gymnasium with basketball nets, meeting room, outdoor soccer field and beach volleyball. The church has a Basketball program called “Upwards”; this consists of over 50 youth participating.

Pastor Steve agreed to hold some Recreation programs at the Church, as long as it met with their requirements. A rental fee for space and time of use would be determined based on the length and frequency of programs. He is also allowing for Recreation Brochures to be distributed and Program Instructor Job Description posted.

Financial Impact

Any cost for rental space would be included in 2014 budget.
Respectfully submitted,

Kerri Craig-Paul
Recreation Coordinator

KCP

/es
Recommendation

That Recreation Report No. R13-010, dated 21 August 2013, with respect to E-bikes on the Uhthoff Trail be received;

And Further That E-bikes be considered motorized vehicles and prohibited from use on the Uhthoff Trail.

Background

At the July 11, 2013 Recreation meeting, staff was requested to contact the County of Simcoe regarding the rules for electric cycles on trails.

In 2009, the Province of Ontario amended the Ontario Highway Traffic Act to allow electric bicycles (e-bikes) to travel on public roads to expand mobility options for Ontarians and provide an environmentally friendly way to travel. Municipalities may pass by-laws specific to e-bikes that prohibit them from municipal roads, sidewalks, bike paths, bike trails, and bike lanes under their influence.

With respect to the various forms of transportation, safety is a key priority and ensuring the safe integration of e-bikes with other vehicles and pedestrians must be considered in conjunction with other benefits such as environmental and social.

The City of Orillia permits the use of E-bikes with various provisions. The Township of Tay classifies E-bikes as a Motorized Vehicle which is prohibited.

It is staff's recommendation that E-bikes be prohibited from use on the Uhthoff Trail.
Financial Impact

None

Respectfully submitted,

[Signature]

Kerri Craig-Paul
Recreation Co-ordinator

Attachments
If there are any items the Recreation Committee would like to be considered for the 2014 Budget staff will need time to obtain quotations.

Therefore, please be prepared to discuss any requests you may have at the September 11th meeting. This should include reviewing any outstanding items from the Washago Park Plan.

Thank you.

Elizabeth Staszkow
Secretary
Culture & Recreation Advisory Committee
(705) 325-2315 Ext 241

Individuals who submit letters and other information to Council should be aware that any personal information contained within their communications may become part of the public record and may be made available to the public through the Council/Committee Agenda process.
Hi Liz
This email is for our conversation the other day about the trail behind my property in Fesserton.
As I mentioned in our conversation that my daughter works in Coldwater and the fact that the old railroad track was opened up for joggers people on bike,s people walking there dogs and as of now ebikes.
The police and ministry of transportation has weight, speed, and it has to have pedals it is classed as a power assisted bicycle when my daughter is on the trail she is safe. She can also go on any county road a bicycle can travel on. I personally hope she can use the trail as it is safer than using County road 16.
I have been informed that the township is having a meeting on the subject of ebikes on the trail.
Yours truly
David Hemmings.
From: Steve <steve@matchedashcamp.ca>
Sent: Thursday, July 11, 2013 7:24 PM
To: Liz Staszkow
Subject: Fwd: Bike Tour Report

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

From: Antony Hilliard <anthill@hailmail.net>
Date: 1 July, 2013 11:10:19 PM EDT
To: steve@matchedashcamp.ca
Subject: Bike Tour Report

Hi Steve,

Thanks for the hospitality last month, the icepack was a great help to my poor knees. The trip was a good one and we finally got around to writing it up here:

http://www.bikeforums.net/showthread.php/899007-Barrie-Penetanguishine-Orillia-Mini-tour-Report-%28170km-Ontario-Canada%29

Thanks for your work with the local trails group. Hope that all-day GO Transit and some better 'last mile' links can bring some more tourism your way in the future.

-A
THE LATEST LUXURY VEHICLE FROM DETROIT IS HITTING THE ROAD.

THE SHINOLA BIKE TOUR

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My girlfriend and I did a weekend trip on the North Simcoe / Trans-Canada / Midland Rotary / Tay Shore / Uhthoff / Oro-Medonte Trails (way simpler than it sounds).

In case someone else is interested in the trip, I thought I'd share it here. (click below for Google Map)
Keen to make the most of this weekend, we drove up the night before, so as to get an early start Saturday (and we wanted an excuse to camp in our van). Late in the evening we found the rail path, then explored looking for somewhere we could get away with car-camping. The best option seemed to be the huge gravel parking lot of the local Guides hockey / soccer / baseball park on Sunnidale between Pinegrove and Grenfel Rds. It had tons of space, so we hid our van in the back corner next to the woods.
and had a good (mosquito-free) night's sleep!

Early next morning, we rode off to find the rail-trail in the daylight, and were a bit surprised to find that it
was just coarse gravel dumped over the train tracks. Our Pino tandem has wide tires and front shocks, but isn't exactly an off-road monster. After a few hundred meters we tried switching to the snowmobile path running parallel to the tracks.

A kilometer in we were wondering if I'd made a huge mistake planning this trip. Water pools in the trail were getting more frequent and I had to ride on the track embankment, inches from a 3' drop into mud.

Finally, just before the Pinegrove Rd. Crossing, the trail crossed some regional border and transformed into a reasonable crushed-stone path. I'm guessing it had something to do with the town of Essa not being willing-to-pay up-for-trail maintenance. This administrative fragmentation of the trail would become a theme of the trip.

A better starting point would be Pinegrove Rd., or if you need a place to park your car, maybe at one of the 3 parking spots at the George Johnson Rd. access point.

The first 30km were quiet and felt more remote than they really were. We snuck up on deer crossing the trail, a turkey vulture chewing on something in the woods, and many smaller critters. The trail ran right through farmers' fields, with crops on either side. Gorgeous.

Approaching Elmvale at Flos Road 7, the second sign of trail fragmentation blocked our path. Some farmer had bought out the rail right-of-way and blocked the trail. Didn't look the corn was growing that well on the gravel rail-bed, but oh well. We detoured down to Highway 27 to have a nice visit to Elmvale. Found a bakery and had a late 2nd breakfast with some tasty apple strudel.
Getting out of Elmvale on the trail was even more difficult and started our typical routine of me getting us totally lost in towns. The rail right-of-way had been sold off for a U-store-it (location is crucial dontcha know!), and snooping around for the trail turned up nothing but closed gates, some of which seemed
only to be opened in snowmobile season. So another few km of riding on Highway 27 and we finally picked up the trail again where it runs through the town of Saurin.
The trail operator was now Tiny Township, who surprisingly allowed ATVs on the trails. This led to the trail surface being chewed up and soft, which made riding the 500+lb tandem a lot of work. Without warning, stable patches of trail would start to 'scrub' sideways, and the bike would swerve and dig in. Linda kindly tolerated me dumping us into the dirt once.
On the plus side, the trilliums were gorgeous, and we surprised an osprey and a pileated woodpecker! Lunchtime happened 47km in at Balm Beach Rd. on a little picnic table (pro tip: don't heat baked beans in the can on a camping stove without watching it like a hawk). I was getting a bit worried about time and distance – our legs were tired and we both needed a nap, and it was only 1pm!
Thankfully, our ride got a whole lot easier as the slope started to go downhill to Georgian Bay, the trail surface improved (no ATVs in Penetanguishine's jurisdiction), and the East turn brought a tailwind. The trail into Penetanguishine was a freshly-paved rollercoaster, with the rail bridges replaced with shorter...
bridges joined by short steep drops / climbs. Good fun if you're the Captain!

Penetanguishine was lovely, and had a little trail network of its own. Continuing the tradition, I got us totally lost, following one of the Penetanguishine trails halfway across town. Some friendly locals got us turned around and on the right track back to Murray Rd. and a steep, gravelly trail down to Midland Harbor. Apparently it was part of an old military marching path. Road bikes would have trouble with this section, but the Pino did fine (with a few seconds of white-knuckling).
The next trail section run by the Midland and Waubaushene areas was impeccable. A real pleasure to ride, especially with a 30km/h tailwind coming off the lake. By this point, my knees were getting a little sore, as were Linda's. I guess starting the year with a 90km fully loaded ride might be a bit of a bad idea? We passed the old wooden fort at the Sainte-Marie tourist attraction, but didn't stop (one of my few regrets from the trip).
Pulling into Matchedash Campground was a relief. Steve, the owner, kindly set us up with our pick of tent spots and a bag of ice for my rapidly-swelling knees. Wine and chocolate plus a lovely view complete with herons, ducks, and sunset were some consolation, and we got to bed early.
The next morning I hobbled around, had a quick shower, and we were off bright and early. Thanks to the local trail association (which Steve helps to run), the rail trail has recently been upgraded and was in
excellent condition through Coldwater. Unfortunately our pictures start to get scarce here as our knees continued to hurt and we wondered if we could (or should) ride all the way back to Barrie!

With a few stops for rest (and wading in an ice-cold stream), the shady railpath led us 30km down to Orillia, where the signage shifted to show its 1980s origins. As per tradition I got us lost again, leading us almost across Lake Simcoe before realizing that the sun was on the wrong side of the trail. Connecting to the south-bound rail line out of Orillia takes a bit of side-street navigation.

Signage and navigation was frustrating throughout this whole trip. The piecemeal management of the trail meant distances were marked only within-sections (except for the Snowmobile Association distance markers), and trailside maps only showed whichever local trail you happened to be on. This meant that the Oro-Medonte trail out of Orillia wasn't shown on the Orillia Waterfront Trail maps! When planning the trip, the trail seemed so continuous I figured that connections would be obvious. Wrong. There's no signage, and without help making the trail connections, I got us consistently lost in every town and probably added at least 5km to our trip. One funny side effect of so many small trail management committees is that each had a totally different gate design. Some used the old post-and-zigzag, others were bent-tube powder-coated cadillacs. All were hard to navigate with our wide tandem bike. I liked Waubaushene's “Two Cement Blocks” gates the best – keep it simple, and below waist-height.
Once on the Oro-Medonte trail south out of Orillia, our pace settled down to a dull ache. The scenery for the next 35km was fairly plain, with the highlight riding through the overgrown site of what looked like an old Provincial boarding school. Well-marked crossing markers counted down the distance to the end of
the trail, as we tried to judge if our legs would carry us that far. Thanks to a rest stop near Shanty Bay and a water bottle refill courtesy of some nice neighbours, we started to feel like we would make it.

Then, just before Barrie, the trail evaporated. Some bureaucrat sold off the railpath right-of-way and subdivided lakeview lots through it. Path users are shunted onto a busy no-shoulder road. We rode on the sidewalk, as we were not making very good speed. I was discouraged at this point, whining about my knees and the state of the public realm in Canada.

Crossing the town boundary into Barrie, the trail reappeared, and it was happy days again. Happy days continued at a local pub; until we had to decide whether to take a taxi back to the van, or ride the final 12km. With a gas-station-bought icepack leaking on my knee, and a lot of cursing, we rode it. Definitely the most grueling leg of the trip. But, in the end, we made it! 170km and two very sore riders.

The aftermath had us hobbling around the city for a few days. Thankfully the physio found that my knee pain was from IT-band inflammation, which is good in that it hurts so bad that you can't really keep exercising long enough to do any permanent damage. Now we both have new stretching routines to do.

So the verdict: Lovely route, highly recommended. Bring a fat-tired bike for the rough patches, a map for the city connections, and maybe split it into 3 days if you are casual riders like us. The Perkinsfield-Coldwater part of the ride is the most scenic, the Coldwater-Orilla the most shady and farm-like while the Orilla-Barrie section is the best constructed but a little sun-exposed. Definitely ride it clockwise unless you like headwinds.

If Ontario is going to re-vamp its Provincial bike strategy, this trail loop could provide a good test-case. All it needs to become a fantastic Toronto tourist destination is a bit of money to patch in the sections where locals have sold off the right-of-way, signage to help tie in the loose ends, GO train bike transport, and marketing to help mooks like us find it.
I have been asked about having the Muskoka Concert Band come to the park in Washago to do a show. The person asking was wondering if this would be something the township would be interested in funding or supporting. More information is coming as per my request but the Township of Gravenhurst offers this type of event and it was suggested Severn do the same.

The next Culture & Recreation Meeting is Thursday July 11th at 7:00 pm.

Please forward any items you would like included on the agenda to me by Noon Friday June 28th. I have had to move the agenda deadline forward as I will be on vacation the following week.

Thank you.

Elizabeth Staszkow
Secretary
Culture & Recreation Advisory Committee
(705) 325-2315 Ext 241

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